SCHOOL FIRE DRILL; A SAMPLE.

ANYTHING ELSE IN NEW YORK YOU'D RATHER KNOW ABOUT?

Kindly Watch Miss Sarah M. Bleakley Setting the Machinery to Work to Get 2,300 Children Outside of No. 86 Inside of Two Minutes When the Roof Burns

esterday morning of a class of boys in grammar department of Public School 86. Lexington avenue and Ninety-sixth street, probably never will be eligible to join the fire department, but whenever there is a blaze where the lives of children are in danger the department chiefs will be mighty glad to have her around. It is pretty certain, too, that they wouldn't mind seeing on duty in the case of all schoolhouse fires the other forty-four teachers who helped to avert a panic in No. 86 vesterday morning.

Miss Bleakley's class was in session on the top floor of the big five story brick building. There were probably fifty boys. ranging from 10 to 12 years old, in her room when she thought she smelled smoke. Excusing herself for a moment, she stepped into a rear room. The smell there was very strong and she thought she could detect tiny strings of smoke leaking through

"Go on, Willie," she said a moment later to a tousle headed ten-year-old who was

strimbling through a reading lesson. Willie went on, and while he was doing it Miss Bleakley was bending over her desk writing a note to the principal. Willie, who was far from being a winner when it came to pronouncing big words, had been making a record for himself. "Psycho-"hysterical," "parallel" and a w of the other prizes that reading book makers hand out to their victims he was eating alive. He had gone through several paragraphs without being stopped once. although a dozen eager hands were raised in protest in all parts of the room and some hildren were snapping their fingers.

"Yes. Willie, that's right, sit down said Miss Bleakley, and then she summoned one of the older boys to the desk. The room was too busy commenting on Willie's extraordinary "rush" to take any particular notice of the note.

Will you please take this right down to the principal for me?" said the teacher. and the messenger was off in a jiffy. Miss Bleakley had taken the precaution to seal the note in an envelope.

Encouraged by Willie's get away, the next" had started on his paragraph with the throttle wide open, but he was hardly under way when there came three quick rings of the alarm bell.

Well," remarked Miss Bleakley, "I guess we're going to have a fire drill to-day. That was nothing new for the boys of 86. They have had one two or three times every month. It was a good deal better than a reading recitation any day. Even Willie was willing to subscribe to that.

Almost before the teacher had got the words out of her mouth every boy had the cover of his deak pushed back and was standing at attention in the sisle. A "Forwas all that was needed and the lines began to move out by twos. The leaders knew just what stairway to take and inside of a minute and thirty-five seconds Miss Bleakley's pupils were standing safe in the street. Then many of them realized for the first time that the building really was on fire.

What had occurred in Miss Bleakley's room after the bell had been sounded was repeated in every classroom in the building, except in the kindergarten departt where there were about forty tots. The alarm which the principal, John J. O'Reflly, had turned in from his desk in his ffice on the ground floor of the building had sounded in every school room. But before he had pressed the alarm Principal O'Reilly had taken the precaution to notify Miss Ada A. Brennan, who had charge of the primary department on the lower

the primary department on the lower floors.

There were about 1,000 boys in the grammar department. They filed out through six hallways under the direction of twenty teachers. The primary department had both boys and girls, but they went out almost as quickly and with just as good order as the grammar department. There were 1,500 pupils in the primary department, and twenty-five teachers marshalled them for the march out. The entire school of 2,500 pupils, with the exception of those in the kindergarten, was out in less than two minutes, and most of them in that time were hurrying away to their homes.

The kindergarten pupils were kept in until almost an hour after the fire had been discovered. Then the water was trickling through the ceiling of the ground floor and the forty little ones, each under the arm of a teacher, were sent to their homes. They were all old enough to realize that there was something wrong, but their very greatest concern, especially when the water began to drip from the ceiling, was for their colored blocks. A fireman of Hook and Ladder 13 who rescued a set of these blocks to quiet a heartbroken youngster got a kiss for his trouble. He said that he had never done a better day's work.

The first alarm of the fire was sounded

work.

The first alarm of the fire was sounded from the schoolhouse, where the Fire Department has a special box It brought only one engine, and the firemen quickly rang in another alarm. Apparently some of the boys, though, were really afraid that the schoolhouse would burn, for they ran to a box at Ninety-sixth street and Third avenue and turned in another alarm. This brought one engine from as far as This brought one engine from as far as 118th street and more trucks and engines than there was any need for, but they were

than there was any need for, but they were all kept on the job.

The fire had started in the northeast corner of the building, above what the firemen call a hanging ceiling. There was a space of two or three feet between the ceiling of the top floor and the roof. Some of the school's supplies had been stored there, and it was in this closet room that the fire started. It was suspected that one of the electric wires had got short circuited. The fire spread through the entire garret room, of the schoolhouse. It took about three hours to drown out the blaze, and then the roof had fallen in and the upper story of the schoolhouse was just about ruined. The lower stories were badly damaged by water and some persons thought it would be several months before it could be used again.

One fireman, Martin C. Lang of Hook and Ladder 13, was caught when a part of the roof went in. He fell and was slipping toward a hole chopped in the roof when two of his fellow firemen caught him. His nose was badly cut and he had an ugly scalp wound.

nose was badly cut and he had an ugly scalp wound.

The reserves of four precincts were turned out at the blaze, and they managed to calm excited mothers and preserve the fire lines in fine style. The most auxious mothers were those who had children in the kindergarten department, but they got quick assurance from the schoolteachers that all were safe.

Supt. Maxwell arrived before the fire was out. He said that if the damaged building couldn't be repaired within two or three days he would make arrangements to have the pupils go on half time in neigh-

or three days he would make arrangements to have the pupils go on half time in neighboring schools. Supt. Maxwell said further:

"The people of this city may be thankful that there was no loss of life and may well be proud of the teachers and supervisory staff of the school."

Some idea of the splendid order with which the boys and girls came out was afforded by District Superintendent Edward D. Farrell. who had an office in the school-house. He looked out of the window and said to himself: "Hello, they are having a fire drill." Then it occurred to him several minutes later that the boys and girls were staying out longer than they did usually, and about that time he heard the clang of a fire engine and ran out to see a cloud of smoke floating up from the roof.

MELBA'S OPERA HOUSE. She Has a Most Elaborate Plan, but It's

Largely Talk at 3 ot. The most comprehensive plan for a new opera house ever outlined in New York was announced yesterday by Mme. Melba, who says she has been selected as the acting manager. Mme. Melba is out of town on a concert tour. Her secretary, Miss Murphy, told a Sun reporter-last night that the mater was still in an "elementary" stage.

"Mme. Melba has received the offer of all the money necessary for the new opera house," Miss Murphy said, "but the project is still in its infancy. Carnegie Hall is the site selected for the new opera house, and Mme. Melba has been assured that the property is in the market for the purpose

"If the scheme is carried through all the operatic enterprises in New York will be

operatic enterprises in New York will be combined in this one opera house.

This would involve the abandonment of the Metropolitan and Manhattan Opera. Houses. Oscar Hammerstein merely said that he had heard of the scheme, but declined to give any details. He did not say that he knew any. Ernest Goerlitz, managing director for Heinrich Conried, was evidently not inclined to believe that Mme. Melba would be able to have the Metropolitan Opera House abandoned immediately.

Company until 1911."

So it seems that the Metropolitan will exist for four years more. One of the stockholders who was seen last night about the new project expressed no alarm over the fate of the opera house. He suggested that the offer of an engagement to Mms. Melba at the Metropolitan might diminish the chances of the projected opera house. Mme. Melba is to go to Australia next winter and will return here in February to sing at the Manhattan for a few appearances.

next season is so large at the Metropolitan that subscription performances will be given on Thursdays next year. It was intended to add Tuesdays as well, but the Philadelphia engagements made that impossible possible.

Mme. Cavalieri sails to-day. There are certain deatils of her contract still to be arranged, and it will be signed in Paris.

MONDAY NIGHT OPERAS.

'Rigoletto" on Broadway and Two Works

Monday night subscribers at the Metropolitan Opera House began their fifteenth week last night by finding the fatal placards at the outer gates. Once more sudden indisposition had done its deadly work and Antonio Scotti had given up the attempt to sing the title role. The inevitable result was Riccardo Stracciari, whose interpretation of the music quivered not with emo-

tation of the music quivered not with emotion but tremolo.

Mme. Sembrich was the Gilda and in her case nothing but praise is required. Mr. Caruso was quite at home as the evil Duke without a name. The performance moved along lines which have become deeply graven at the Metropolitan, but the audience appeared to be highly delighted.

At Mr. Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House Bellin's exciting tragedy "La Sonnambula" was performed, followed by Leoncavallo's sociological representation of Sicilian peasant life entitled, "Pagliacci." The persons concerned in the two operas were those who have been active in them before. Miss Pinkert and Mr. Bonci were the leaders in the Bellini work, while Mme. Donalda, Mr. Bassi and Mr. Sammarco were the most industrious in the other.

CHANGES AT HIPPODROME.

New Circus Features, Including 24 Araba in a Whiriwind Act. Several changes were made last night

in the circus bill at the Hippodrome. The most notable of the new acts was a troop of twenty-four Bedouin Arabs, who scored a whirlwind success with their acrobatic

According to the programme, the aggregation is direct from the Desert of Sahara and it looks the part even down to the camels that accompany the outfit. Tio Tio Benja, a black and tan Arab, who is about as high as a good sized walking stick and has a hairout like a poodle dog, performed amazing flipflaps. When in action Tio Tio closely resembled a Wall street ticker tape floating in the breeze.

The Patti brothers have an acrobatic act. They navigate on their heads without the aid of hands. One eats and drinks while upside down. Another jumps down a flight of stairs while standing on his head. Capt. Webb's seals and sea llons pleased, and Marceline had a lot of new pranks.

LILLIAN RUSSELL SUES.

Wants Half the "Lady Teazle" Profits -Shubert Says There Was a Loss. Lillian Russell has begun an action in the Supreme Court against Lee Shubert and the estate of Sam Shubert for an acand the estate of sam shupert for an accounting of the profits realized by the production of "Lady Teazle," in which she starred two years ago. William Klein, lawyer for the Shuberts, applied yesterday to Justice Newburger for an order directing that the action be tried before a referee, and not in open court, because of the intricate issues. Justice Newburger reserved decision.

decision.

Miss Russell's contract with the Shuberts provided that she should receive a salary of \$700 a week and 50 per cent. of the profits. Her lawyer, Alfred Lauterbach, said that he understood the profits to amount to nearly \$100,000, if not more. Mr. Elein declared that an examination of the receipts and expenditures of the production would show that instead of such a large profit there was an actual loss.

Klaw & Erlanger announced yesterday that when the present season closes New York Theatre will be remodelled and turned into a music hall on the pian of the London Alhambra. The firm signed one hundred vaudeville contracts yesterTHE MILLS OF THE GODS' GRIND

VERY SLOW GRIST THAT YET HAS SOMETHING IN IT.

A Play With a Hero Who Falls to Commi Sympathy Until the Last Act. But Which in Oceasional Strokes Reveals

Mr. George Broadhurst, quondam farosur is trying very hard, and with manifest telligence, to write a real drama of char-acter and emotion. "The Mills of the Gods," which was produced last night at the assor. is an attempt against odds, which no one realises more fully than he. In a mediat little curtain speech to an obviously friendly house he discreetly—and most ingratiat-ingly—asked that jubilation be deferred until the morning after. As regards the main appeal of the play this is likely to prove a cold, gray dawn. Yet it must be aid that the play throughout comme respect, and in many incidental features represents at its best its author's bread sense of character and humor and his ma

sincerity and simplicity.

The trouble is all along of his hero. Clarke is a young man with every virtue except wisdom and steadfastness of purexcept wisdom and steadfastness of purpose. He is no hero of melodrama, certainly. It takes him the longest time to get worked up to any deed of honest courage. Hence the slowness with which the mills of the gods grind out the grist of his

final triumph and happiness.

To save the life of a alster to whom he is devoted, he commits embezzlement, and falls victim to a blackmalling associate Unable to stand up against the hardshi of State prison, he breaks jail, and when old associate of embezziement and prison turns up, and the blackmail begins all over again; this time interfering in the poo 'ellow's love.

It is only in the last sot that he makes clean breast of the whole wretched, mieguided business; and though Mr. Broad-hurst comes to his rescue with a Governor's mand the lemience of a public nourished on all the melodramatic virtues. True the haracter may be, in fact undoubtedly is. But though it possesses every virtue except sense and pluck, including Chaunery Ol-cott's love of other people's children, it somehow fails to hold the play together.

To the disabilities of the play must be added the fact that its love story is slight and on the whole conventional. Miss Florence Rockwell has seldom had a slenderer part than that of the beloved of James Clarke, and though she plays it with sim plicity and no little vocal appeal it counts for almost nothing. Mr. Broadhurst has yet to prove that he can portray feminine character or eveke any real emotion.

There are episodes throughout the play however, which reveal a very high degre of observation of character and command of humorous effect. The first act represen Clarke's trial for embezzlement. The spar ring of the opposed lawyers is vivacious in he extreme.

The acting of Frank Sheridan as counse for the defence was almost as good as that which is daily to be seen in our courts of law, and the clerk of the court, Mr. David Thompson, mumbled and gabbled his solems legal oaths with most laughable realism From the way the audience laughed at it all you would have thought every man and woman had been in the dock.

But at the climax the culprit receives elegram telling him that his sister, having heard of his plight, has died of the shock. and he confesses to his crime. Never were candor and innate honesty more misplaced on the stage. One felt that the best of legal powder had been wasted. larke at last as it seem

to the true sense of the situation into which

he has drifted, meets his blackmailing friend in a hand to hand fight. Much has been made of this encounter in preliminary accounts of the play. The scene is realistically managed, and Robert Drouet, who plays this dubious hero, rises in his passion to a very real formidability. But once more he is obliged to execute a rubber-back contortion. The blackmailer draws a knife, and Clarke wrests it away from him. With the situation all in his hands, however, being altogether justified in killing his antagonist on the score of self-defence, he allows his Little Old Man of the Sea to escape and perch again on his too week and too conscientious

It is characteristic of the play that the incidental characters offered the best opportunities to the actors. Edgar Selwyn as the blackmailer had moments of fine aplomb and cool vernacular. As an able and laconic Jewish trust promoter Frank Sheridan, to whom fell a dual role, all but equalled his performance as attorney for the defence. As a rustic enthusiast who learned to be a detective in a magazine correspondence school Toby Lyons was unfai lingly amusing, and Louise Closser, again the Prossy type of typewriter, was again admirably characteristic. If the whole were as true and as amusing as the minor parts "The Mills of the Gods" might be warranted to grind a grist of gold. It is characteristic of the play that the

Geraldine Farrar Sings for Charity. Geraldine Farrar and Mme. Samaroff appeared yesterday afternoon at the concert given at the Waldorf-Astoria for the benefit of the New York Home for the Indigent of the New York Home for the Indigent Blind. More than \$5.000 was realized from the sale of tickets and all of this went to the charity as all the expenses of the concert were paid by one of the directors of the home. The directors of the institute issued a formal expression of thanks to the two young artists for their cooperation in the



AT ALL BOOKSELLERS

BEN GREET'S PLAYERS.

Give "The Merchant of Venice" in Eliza-

Ben Greet's company of English players met a keenly interested and appreciative audience last night in the production of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Garden Theatre, the opening play of a four weeks engagement in New York. As in all Mr. Greet's productions, the play was from the original and complete text. The atmosphere was distinctly Elizabethan. There were Elizabethan costumes, Elizabethan music, Elizabethan scenery. The Elizabethan curtain consisted of the crossing of the stage by the two solemn and lusty Elizabethan beef eaters to mark the end of acts. Their sittings down and risings up indicated the end of scenes.

The scenery was the same throughout, a simple wall with four entrances and a portico in the centre, representing Middle Temple Hall, London. From this cold

Temple Hall, London. From this cold wall the audience drew upon its imagination for pictures of various streets in Venice. Portic's palace at Belmont, Shylock's duostal house and Antonio's court of trial.

Ben Greet as Shylock drew forth much applause as he made his bargain with Antonio, when he raved between the loss of his ducats and his daughter, and as he whetted his knife to cut out the pound of fish.

Agnes Scott as Portia was well received, particularly in the trial scene.

Percy Waram pleased as Gratiano, and Fritz Leiber as the dusky Prince of Morocco Fritz Leiber as the dusky Prince of Morocco captivated with his gallant manner and his dashing looks. Sydney Greenstreet as Launcelot Gotto amused in his antice as past master in artistic tip collecting. Sybil Thorndike played Nerleag, Olive Noble Jessica, Frederick Sargent Bassanio, Redmond Flood Antonio and Milton Rosmer Laurence.

News of Plays and Players. Mise Christie MacDonald after a week's absence due to a wrenched ankle returned last night to the cast of "The Belle of Mayfair" at Daly's Theatre, assuming her role

A new play by Curt Kraatz, the author of "Are You a Mason?" will be presented to-night for the first time at Mr. Conried's Irving Place Theatre. The play is a farce in three acts entitled "Die Doppel Ehe," in which Willi Thaller will play the leading

Arrangements were completed between Joe Weber and Lloyd Bingham by which Amelia Bingham and her company will move into Weber's Theatre for three of the eight weeks that "Dream City" and "The Magic Knight" will be on the road. The engagement begins the first week of April, Miss Bingham interrupting her tour at New Orleans to come to New York. She will be seen in her new play, "The Lilac Room."

bethan Style at the Garden Theatre.

mond Flood Antonio and Milton Roemer Lovenzo.

A small orohestra played two famous Elizabethan and several Venetian tunes back of the scenes, and the song "Tell Me Where in Fancy Bred" was sung on the stage while Bassanio was choosing his casket.



with whom her mother has not lived for years. The mystery of her father's home and the revelations of a strange subterranean life that quickly follow, develop into

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